

Understanding and application of RDA Toolkit in Latin America and the Caribbean

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ABSTRACT

This article provides an overview of activities in the Latin America and the Caribbean Region in its progress towards implementation of Official RDA.

KEYWORDS RDA

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The Latin America and the Caribbean (ALyC) RDA Group¹ was formally established in June of 2025 ([Quiroz Ubierna, 2025](#)). However, before and throughout 2025, colleagues, institutions and countries in the Latin America and the Caribbean region successfully engaged in diverse actions to promote the understanding and application of RDA. These efforts focused on sharing experiences, research, and studies in the RDA.

From 1 April to 4 April 2025, the Grupo RDA México², together with the Instituto de Investigaciones Bibliotecológicas y de la Información (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México) and the Escuela de Bibliotecología, Documentación e Información (Universidad Nacional de Costa Rica) organised the *2do. Encuentro de Educación en Organización de la Información: "Retos y oportunidades en la enseñanza y aprendizaje de RDA Toolkit"*³ (2nd Meeting on Education for the Organization of Information), parting from the concerns about new challenges brought upon by the transition from the Original RDA Toolkit to the Official RDA Toolkit, its teaching and learning, and the understanding that it is essential to analyse and discuss these challenges among educators in Latin American countries.

The following month, the Grupo RDA México invited the community of RDA subscribers from Mexico and Latin America to participate in the *1ª. Reunión de Usuarios RDA*⁴ (1st RDA Users Meeting). It was held on 14 May 2025 at the Universidad Nacional

¹ <https://www.rdatoolkit.org/latinamerica>

² RDA Mexico Group, website: <https://difusion.iibi.unam.mx/RDA-M%C3%A9xico/index.html>

³ Conference website: <https://difusion.iibi.unam.mx/EEOI/2025/index.html> and conference recordings: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLh_W-DNA7i7hM76nMrvVf3DLFwYvdB4Z

⁴ Conference website: <https://difusion.iibi.unam.mx/EURDA/programaAcademico.html>

Autónoma de México with the objective of sharing experiences, best practices, and success stories on the adoption and application of RDA Toolkit in libraries and other institutions.

Coinciding with the establishment of the ALyC RDA Group, from 16 to 18 June 2025, the Biblioteca Nacional del Perú (BNP), together with the Grupo RDA Peru⁵, organised the *II Encuentro sobre organización de la información*⁶ (2nd Meeting on Information Organisation), which collected a variety of national and international experiences on the organisation of information, the implementation of RDA, and new trends in the formation of professionals entrusted with these tasks.

Felipe Martínez, RSC representative from Mexico, and Ángela Quiroz, RDA Board member from Chile, participated as speakers in all three of these meetings.

Felipe Martínez, LAyC Representative to the RSC, also delivered the conference papers '*De la catalogación a la gestión de metadatos: Las RDA en los archivos sonoros y audiovisuales*'⁷ ('From Cataloging to Metadata Management: RDA in Sound and Audiovisual Archives', [Martínez Arellano, 2025a](#)) on 27 June 2025, at the invitation of the Red Iberoamericana de Preservación Digital de Archivos Sonoros y Audiovisuales⁸ (RIDAPSA), and '*RDA Toolkit Oficial: un estándar para la organización de la información del futuro*' ('Official RDA Toolkit: A Standard for the Organization of Information of the Future', [Martínez Arellano, 2025b](#)), during the *1er Simposio sobre Organización de los Datos y la Información en los Ecosistemas Digitales*⁹ (1st Symposium on Data and Information Organization in Digital Ecosystems), held from 3-5 September 2025 by El Colegio de México and the Red de Bibliotecas Académicas de América Latina y el Caribe¹⁰ (RedBAALC).

The *XIV Encuentro Latinoamericano de Catalogación y Metadatos*¹¹ (XIV Latin American Meeting on Cataloging and Metadata) was held on 1 to 3 October 2025 at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM) with the theme '*Reflexiones en torno al RDA Toolkit Oficial*' ('Reflections on the Official RDA Toolkit'). It was organised by the Grupo RDA México and sponsored by the Instituto de Investigaciones Bibliotecológicas y de la Información (UNAM), the Dirección General de Bibliotecas y Servicios de Información Digital (UNAM), and the Biblioteca Nacional de México. Keynote speakers included Charlene Chou, member of the RDA Board and RSC Joint Working Group on Artificial Intelligence, who presented on RDA and Artificial

⁵ RDA Peru Group, more information at: <https://www.bnp.gob.pe/tag/grupo-rda-peru/>

⁶ A summary of the event is available at: <https://www.bnp.gob.pe/biblioteca-nacional-del-peru-realizo-con-exito-ii-encuentro-sobre-organizacion-de-la-informacion/>

⁷ Conference website: <http://www.congresoarchivosdigitales.unam.mx/metadescripcion/>

⁸ Ibero-American Network for Digital Preservation of Sound and Audiovisual Archives, website: <https://www.cyted.org/RIPDASA>

⁹ Conference programme: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Kv4ZWVnizp7POAjljWZf-vq5ABGU059Z/view>

¹⁰ Network of Academic Libraries of Latin America and the Caribbean, website: <https://redbaalc.udualc.org/>

¹¹ Conference website: <https://difusion.iibi.unam.mx/ECyM/2025/index.html>

Intelligence ([Chou, 2025](#)), and Michalis Gerolimos, Head of the Cataloguing Department at the National Library of Greece, who gave a paper entitled '*Implementing the Official RDA at the National Library of Greece: Challenges and Lessons Learned*' ([Gerolimos, 2025](#)). In addition to contributing to the previous experience-sharing goals, this meeting was intended as a space in which the Official RDA Toolkit was examined in order to understand its particularities, differences from the Original RDA Toolkit, and the influence it will have on the future of cataloguing and metadata in a world where information resources are increasingly varied and emerging technologies change the way information is accessed and retrieved.

This meeting also provided a space for the official presentation of the RDA Toolkit Spanish translation, published on 29 September 2025 and available to all subscribers. Renate Berhens, Chair of the RSC, ([Behrens, 2025a](#), [Behrens 2025b](#)) James Hennelly, Director of ALA Digital Reference, Felipe Arellano, Representative of Latin America and the Caribbean (ALyC) to the RSC; Cecilia Hernández, Executive Secretary of the Asociación de Estados Iberoamericanos para el Desarrollo de las Bibliotecas Nacionales de Iberoamérica¹² (ABINIA) and Ricardo Santos, from ABINIA's Grupo de Trabajo RDA¹³, participated with speeches on the importance of this translation for Latin American countries. Felipe Martínez also delivered the keynote address *Retos para la implementación de RDA Toolkit Oficial en América Latina*¹⁴ ([Martínez Arellano, 2025c](#)).

The Spanish language release of RDA Toolkit responds to a commonly expressed need in the region: the language barrier prevented Spanish speakers from familiarising themselves with RDA Toolkit and implementing it. An agreement was reached with ABINIA, who determined the Biblioteca Nacional de México would be responsible for the translation, with Felipe Martínez acting as its coordinator. The project began in November 2023 and ended in October 2025 supported by a joint contribution to its funding by the American Library Association (ALA) and Información Científica Internacional (ICI).

Now that the Spanish translation has been released and is available to all Spanish speaking cataloguers, the path for continuing the work that has already been done is clearer. Next steps focus on training in the use of the RDA Toolkit and promoting its adoption and implementation across the Latin American region. This point will be addressed in the future with the development of a training program. Finally, it is considered very important that Latin American cataloguers explore the RDA Toolkit and familiarise themselves with it as a previous stage for its adoption and application.

¹² Association of Ibero-American States for the Development of National Libraries of Ibero-American Countries, website: <https://www.asociacionabinia.org/>

¹³ RDA Working Group, website: <https://www.asociacionabinia.org/trabajorda>

¹⁴ 'Challenges for the Implementation of the Official RDA Toolkit in Latin America'

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